

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1 to 31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently amended) A composition ~~for administration into an arthritic or inflamed joint in a mammalian subject, comprising a therapeutically effective amount of~~ a nucleic acid with a sequence encoding a polypeptide that promotes apoptosis in mammalian cells wherein said composition is formulated for administration into an arthritic or inflamed joint in a mammalian subject and for transfection of synoviocytes within said joint, and

wherein said amount is effective in reducing signs of arthritis or inflammation upon administration into a joint of a mammalian subject.

33. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, which induces apoptosis in synoviocytes present in a joint to which it is administered.

34. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, wherein the nucleic acid is an expression vector in which said polypeptide encoding sequence is operably linked to a promoter that promotes expression of the encoded polypeptide in fibroblast-like synoviocytes.

35. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, where the nucleic acid is a viral vector.

36. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 35, wherein the viral vector is an adenovirus vector.
37. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 35, wherein the viral vector is replication deficient.
38. (Cancelled)
39. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, wherein the polypeptide is selected from p53, p21Waf, ras, proteins in the Bax family, and proteins in the ICE family.
40. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, wherein the polypeptide is a peptidomimetic or binding agent of p53, p21Waf, ras, a protein in the Bax family, or a protein in the ICE family.
41. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 32, wherein the subject has composition is formulated for administration into a joint of a subject having rheumatoid arthritis.
42. (Withdrawn) (Currently amended) The composition of claim 32, wherein the subject has composition is formulated for administration into a joint of a subject having ankylosing spondylitis, psoriatic arthritis, or inflammatory bowel disease.
43. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 32, formulated for administration to a human subject.

44. (Withdrawn) A method for promoting apoptosis in synoviocytes in an inflamed joint in a mammal, comprising administering a composition according to claim 32 into said joint.
45. (Withdrawn) A method for treating rheumatoid arthritis in a mammalian subject, comprising administering to into an arthritis joint in said subject a composition according to claim 32.
46. (New) The composition of claim 32, which is formulated such that the nucleic acid is present in microspheres, liposomes, or macromolecular complexes.
47. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the viral vector is an adeno-associated virus (AAV) vector.
48. (New) A composition comprising:
  - a) a plurality of a nucleic acid vector for expressing a polypeptide that promotes apoptosis in mammalian cells; and
  - b) a plurality of fibroblast-like synoviocytes;  
wherein the amount of said vector in the composition is sufficient to reduce the number of said fibroblast-like synoviocytes in the composition.
49. (New) The composition of claim 47, further comprising a plurality of macrophage-like synoviocytes.
50. (New) The composition of claim 47, wherein said fibroblast-like synoviocytes are present in synovial tissue.
51. (New) The composition of claim 47, wherein said vector is an adenovirus or AAV vector.

52. (New) The composition of claim 47, wherein said vector is present in microspheres, liposomes, or macromolecular complexes.
53. (New) The composition of claim 47, wherein the polypeptide is a protein selected from the group consisting of p53 p21Waf, ras, proteins of the Bax family, and proteins of the ICE family, or is a peptidomimetic or binding agent of any protein in said group.
54. (New) A host cell transfected with a nucleic acid vector for expressing a polypeptide that promotes apoptosis in said cell, wherein the cell is a fibroblast-like synoviocyte.